

## Routes to Licensure in Virginia

The Virginia licensure regulations stipulate four routes for individuals to become licensed in Virginia:

- I. Approved Program** - a Virginia state-approved teacher preparation program or an alternative state approved program. (For more information relative to this method of licensure, please contact the [Virginia college or university](#) where you wish to enroll.)\*
- II. Reciprocity** - an individual coming into Virginia from any state may qualify for a Virginia license with comparable endorsement areas if the individual has completed a state-approved teacher training program through a regionally accredited four-year college or university or if the individual holds a valid out-of-state teaching license, which must be in force at the time the application for a Virginia license is made. An emergency or temporary certificate/license is not acceptable.\*
- III. Alternative Licensure** - an alternative route to licensure is available through the recommendation of the individual's employing Virginia school division or accredited nonpublic school. A three-year nonrenewable license can be issued through satisfying endorsement course work, experiential learning, or by meeting the provisional-special education requirements.\*

\*Please refer to the web site, [Professional Teacher's Assessment](#), describing the assessment requirements in Virginia.

A. Satisfying endorsement course work - an individual who is employed by a Virginia school division or nonpublic school seeking this alternative route must:

- hold a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution,
- satisfy one or more specific endorsement areas (teaching areas), and
- submit the application packet through the Virginia employing educational agency.

B. Experiential Learning – an individual who is applying for an initial license must meet the following criteria to be eligible to request experiential learning credits in lieu of the coursework for the endorsement (teaching) content area:

- hold a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited college or university;
- have at least five years of documented full-time work experience that may include specialized training related to the endorsement sought; and
- have met the qualifying score on the content knowledge assessment prescribed by the Board of Education.

The criteria do not apply to teachers of special education and elementary education (preK-3 and preK-6).

C. Provisional-Special Education - an individual employed as a special education teacher in a public school or a nonpublic special education school in Virginia who does not hold the appropriate special education endorsement must:

- Be employed by a Virginia public or nonpublic school as a special educator and have the recommendation of the employing educational agency;
- Hold a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited college or university;
- Have an assigned mentor endorsed in special education; and
- Have a planned program of study in the assigned endorsement area, make progress toward meeting the endorsement requirements each of the three years of the license, and have completed coursework in the competencies of foundations for educating students with disabilities and an understanding and application of the legal aspects and regulatory requirements associated with identification, education, and evaluation of students with disabilities. A survey course integrating these competencies would satisfy this requirement. The Provisional License through this alternate route shall not be issued without the completion of these prerequisites.

NOTE: This alternate route to special education is not applicable to individuals employed as speech pathologists.

**The following requirements must be satisfied in order to become eligible for the five-year renewable license:**

1. Professional Teacher's Assessment (Please refer to the web site, [Professional Teacher's Assessment](#), for more detailed information regarding this requirement.)
2. Professional Studies Requirements: Professional studies course work specified below from a regionally accredited four-year institution or an alternative program for licensure may be submitted by the employing educational agency for review and approval by the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Virginia Department of Education. Refer to the professional studies requirements listed in the [Licensure Regulations for School Personnel](#).

**Early/primary education, elementary education, and middle education - 18 semester hours**

- Human Growth and Development - 3 semester hours
- Curriculum and Instructional Procedures - 3 semester hours for the appropriate instructional level (early/primary education, elementary education or middle education)
- Classroom and Behavior Management - 3 semester hours
- Foundations of Education - 3 semester hours
- Reading -
  - Early/primary and elementary education: 6 semester hours of language acquisition and reading
  - Middle education: 3 semester hours of reading in the content area and 3 semester hours of language acquisition.

### **Special education - 18 semester hours**

- Human Growth and Development - 3 semester hours
- Curriculum and Instructional Procedures - 3 semester hours
- Classroom and Behavior Management - 3 semester hours
- Foundations of Education - 3 semester hours
- Language Acquisition and Reading - 6 semester hours

### **Adult education, Prek-12 endorsements, and secondary grades 6-12 endorsements - 15 semester hours**

- Human Growth and Development - 3 semester hours
  - Curriculum and Instructional Procedures - 3 semester hours
  - Classroom and Behavior Management - 3 semester hours
  - Foundations of Education - 3 semester hours
  - Reading in the Content Area - 3 semester hours
3. One year of successful, full-time teaching experience in the endorsement area in an accredited public or nonpublic school. A fully licensed, experienced teacher must be available in the school building to assist the beginning teacher employed through the alternative route.

#### **IV. Alternative Route for Career Professions** – an alternative route is available to career switchers who seek teaching endorsements preK through grade 12 with the exception of special education.

Please refer to the web site, [Career Switcher Program](#), for detailed information.

Prerequisite requirements:

- An application to an approved Career Switcher Program;
- A baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited college or university;
- The completion of requirements for an endorsement in a teaching area or the equivalent through verifiable experience or academic study;
- At least five years of full-time work experience or its equivalent; and
- Virginia qualifying scores on the professional teacher's assessments as prescribed by the Board of Education.